

REMARKS

Claims 1, 11, 12, 19, 23, 25-30, 34, 37, 47, 55, and 65 have been amended. Applicant acknowledges that the Examiner has suggested amendments for claims 1, 47, and 55 that would place the application in condition for allowance. To expedite prosecution, claims 1, 47, and 55 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Claims 11, 12, 19, 23, 25-30, 34, 37, and 65 have been amended to correct antecedent problems in these claims.

Applicant asserts that the amendments to the claims do not raise new issues or matter. Upon entrance of the amendments, claims 1-47, 55, and 65 will be pending in the captioned application. Alternately, the amendments should be considered to place the case in better form for consideration on appeal. Entrance of the amendments and further examination and reconsideration of claims 1-47, 55, and 65 are respectfully requested.

Section 102 Rejections:

Claims 1-3, 5, 8-29, and 41-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(c) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,011,404 to Ma et al. (hereinafter "Ma").

Claims 1 and 47 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner. The Examiner states that the suggested amendments "would place the application in condition for allowance." (Final Office Action -- page 12.) Therefore, the amendments to claims 1 and 47 render the § 102 rejections of claims 1 and 47 moot. Claims 2-3, 5, 8-29, and 41-46 depend from newly amended claim 1. Therefore, the amendments to claim 1 also render the § 102 rejections of these claims moot.

In light of the form amendments to the aforesaid claims, which were amended as suggested by the Examiner, Applicant respectfully requests removal of the § 102 rejections of claims 1-3, 5, 8-29, and 41-47.

Section 103(a) Rejections:

Claims 1-6, 8-35, 41-47, and 55 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,569,691 to Jastrzebski et al. (hereinafter "Jastrzebski.") in view of Ma. Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ma in view of U.S. Patent No.

5,773,989 to Edelman et al. (hereinafter "Edelman"). Claim 36 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jastrzebski in view of Ma and further in view of Edelman.

Claims 1, 47, and 55 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner. The Examiner states that the suggested amendments "would place the application in condition for allowance." (Final Office Action -- page 12.) Therefore, the amendments to claims 1, 47, and 55 render the § 103 rejections of claims 1, 47, and 55 moot. Claims 2-36 and 41-46 depend from newly amended claim 1. Therefore, the amendments to claim 1 also render the § 103 rejections of these claims moot.

In light of the form amendments to the aforesaid claims, which were amended as suggested by the Examiner, Applicant respectfully requests removal of the § 103 rejections of claims 1-36, 41-47, and 55.

Lack of Support for Rejection:

Claim 40 was rejected in the Office Action Summary. However, the Examiner failed to establish a basis for the rejection. Claim 40 depends from claim 38, which the Examiner has recognized as containing allowable subject matter. Therefore, claim 40 is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 38. As such, allowance of claim 40 is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Claims 37-39 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 65 was allowed. Applicant sincerely appreciates the Examiner's recognition of the patentable subject matter recited in claims 37-39 and 65.

CONCLUSION

This response constitutes a complete response to all of the issues raised in the Final Office Action mailed December 2, 2003. In view of the remarks traversing rejections, Applicants assert that pending claims 1-47, 55, and 65 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, comments, or suggestions, the undersigned agent earnestly requests a telephone conference.

No fees are required for filing this amendment; however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Conley Rose, P.C. Deposit Account No. 03-2769/5589-00501.

Respectfully submitted,



Ann Marie Mewherter
Reg. No. 50,484
Agent for Applicants

Conley Rose, P.C.
P.O. Box 684908
Austin, TX 78768-4908
Ph: (512) 476-1400

Date: 02-02-2004